

\$2.00 USA • \$2.50 CAN/MEX • \$1.00 UK

CEREBUS

ASCENSION'S
END

PART TWO

106
JAN

NOTE • FROM • THE PRESIDENT

Cerebus number 112 (July 1988) begins the new novel **Jaka's Story**. The first book is entitled "Pogrom's Progress" and features Jaka, Cerebus and Jaka's husband. The second book is called "The Poet" the third is called "Mystery Achievement". There will be nine books in total covering a period of roughly three years. It begins within an hour of the conclusion of Church and State.

Personally, I am voting for Gerhard this year in the Kirby Awards' 'Best Artist' category unless I see anyone better. Which I haven't yet.

There will be only one showing of "The Making of 104" in 1988, we just don't know where it will be.

Mike Grell has NOT forgotten his Cerebus Jam story and mentioned it to me at Tony Isabella's house (Hi, Tony) Mid-Ohio Con Eve '87. I promise to print it the moment it arrives (and fly to somewhere in Seattle for a signing to celebrate its publication) (maybe).

A special limited edition of Cerebus 104 will be sold at the only showing of "The Making of 104" and Bob Burden, Roxanne Starr, Gerhard and I will be there to sign and number them. Remember, that's "The Making of 104", we're-not-sure-where, we're-not-sure-when, 1988. Be there.

Harry Kremer points out that Cerebus 2 through 5 should be priced comparably to issue 1 because there are only 2000 copies (or ten years ago there were) of each of the issues. Even allowing for the additional mystique value of #1, I'd say he has a point. I'm not Robert Overstreet or a member of the legion of Substitute Overstreets, but I'd say he has a point.

You **must** buy Nerve #8 if only to see how publisher/creator Starlen Baxter fits the strip title "Those Ever-Popular Torqued-Out Maniacs in Monster City" into a 1" by 11" space. Untoward. From the good people who brought you "100 Words for Penis (Science Series #1)" (I know I can't wait for Series #2) send money with "Nerve Publications" written on it to "Nerve Publications", Box 55394, Lexington, Kentucky, 40555. Heather Clary McAdams does it again with "How To Draw A Scarey Monster Comic Strip in 13 Easy Steps!"

A limited printing of Church and State volume II (reprinting Cerebus #81 to 111) will be made available shortly after the publication of 111, largely, because I SPENT FIVE GODDAMN YEARS PRODUCING IT AND I REFUSE TO WAIT ANOTHER MINUTE TO HAVE VOLUMES ONE AND TWO GRIPPED IN MY . . . ahem . . . sweaty palms. We will only print enough to cover our orders as of June 1st 1988. Each book will be signed by Gerhard and me and numbered. The cost will be \$50 per book (or \$40 U.S.) No quantity discount or limit.

CEREBUS

NO. 106 JANUARY 1988

DAVE SIM
President

KAREN MCKIEL
Administrator

GERHARD
Backgrounds, cover-colour,
and tones

Circulation
27,000

CHURCH AND STATE
a novel

BOOK ONE
(Cerebus 52 to
Cerebus 56)
Après State

BOOK TWO
(Cerebus 57 to
Cerebus 63)
Back to Test

BOOK THREE
(Cerebus 64 to
Cerebus 80)
Church and State

BOOK FOUR
(Cerebus 81 to
Cerebus 89)
The Sacred Wars

BOOK FIVE
(Cerebus 90 to
Cerebus 101)
Astoria

BOOK SIX
(Cerebus 102 to
Cerebus 106)
The Final Ascension

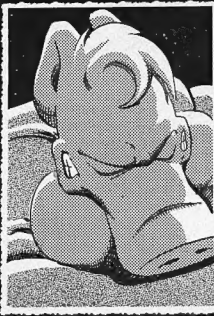
BOOK SEVEN
(Cerebus 107 to
Cerebus 111)

CEREBUS IS PUBLISHED
MONTHLY BY AARDVARK-
VANAHEIM INC. PO BOX
1674 STN. C KITCHENER
ONTARIO CANADA N2G 4R2
ALL CONTENTS ©1988 DAVE
SIM. PRINTED IN CANADA
BY PRENEY PRINT & LITHO
INC., WINDSOR, ONTARIO

GREATNESS GROWING FLIES

AS YOU MAY HAVE
NOTICED, I HAVE,
JUST NOW, GROWN
TO NEARLY TWO-THIRDS
OF MY ULTIMATE GOD-LIKE
SIZE...





"HOW SO?"
YOU MIGHT WELL ASK.
TO UNDERSTAND THAT
YOU MUST FIRST UNDER-
STAND THAT THE PRIMARY
LAW GOVERNING ALL
REALITIES IS THE LAW
OF CONSEQUENCE. IT
IS THE GREAT LEVELLER
OF ALL BEINGS AND
FORMS OF LIFE FROM
MOUSE TO...

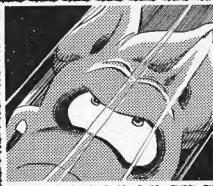
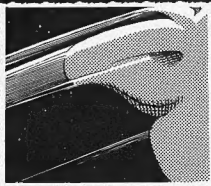
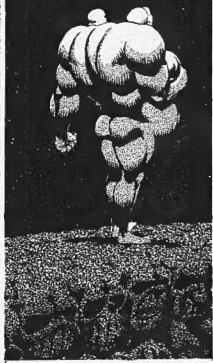


...MESSIAH.



ARE YOU
WITH ME
SO FAR?

SPLENDID.



NOW AS A MESSIAH
(A GOD-MANIFESTATION),
REPERCUSSION
(CONSEQUENCE)
BECOMES A
TRICKY SORT OF
BUSINESS

REPRESENTING
(AS I DO) THE
ASPIRATIONS, THE
HOPES AND ALL
THAT IS GOOD IN
ALL MANKIND,
MY LIFE TAKES
ON A MEANING
GREATER THAN,
WELL, GREATNESS



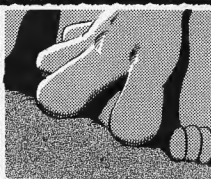
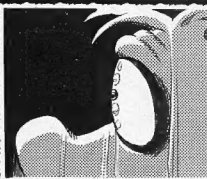
MY LIFE BECOMES,
FOR WANT OF A
BETTER DESCRIPTION,
AN ULTIMATE ART
FORM. EACH MOVE
A SACRED TEXT--
EACH COMMENT
A BOOK OF GREAT
TEACHING AND
WISDOM.



AN
ULTIMATE ART FORM
REPRESENTING AN
HARMONIOUS BALANCE
BETWEEN MALE
AND FEMALE, MAN
AND GOD, CREATOR
AND CREATION...

RENDERED WITH
PAINTERLY SKILL,
STROKE BY PAIN-
STAKING STROKE
LEADING, ULTIMATED,
TO THIS THRESHOLD
OF MY DESTINY

THE MEETING
OF MESSIAH
AND DEITY...



WHICH, ODDLY
ENOUGH, BRINGS
US TO YOU...

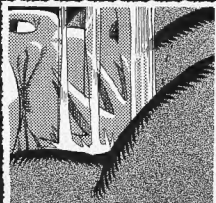
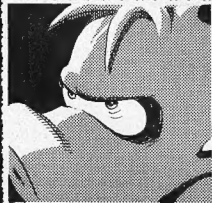
A STRAY BIT OF
PUFF BLOWN ON
WHO KNOWS WHAT
CAPRICIOUS BREEZE
OF FATE--
LODGED...

...ALBERT
TEMPORARILY

...IN THE DAMP
PLEGMENT OF THIS
EPOCH-MAKING
MOMENT...



JUST
ONE OF THOSE
SYNCHRONISTIC
ANOMALIES, IN
THE FACE OF
WHICH EVEN
WE OMNISCIENTS
CAN MERELY
SHRUG



THE PROBLEM REDUCES
ITSELF TO ONE OF
DISPOSAL... RETURNING
US (AS IT DOES) TO
OUR OLD FRIEND
CONSEQUENCE...

I GRANT THAT YOU
DON'T LOOK LIKE
MUCH OF ANYTHING
(ASIDE FROM THE...
SELF-EVIDENT...
DEFORMITIES).

BUT WHO COULD SAY
(OF A CERTAINTY) THAT
YOUR *DEMISE* MIGHT
NOT TRIGGER... SAY
... A SERIES OF
REPERCUSSIONS

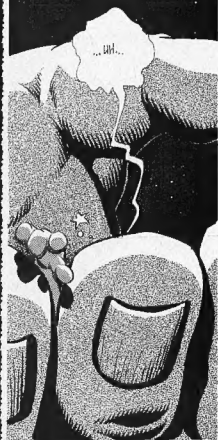
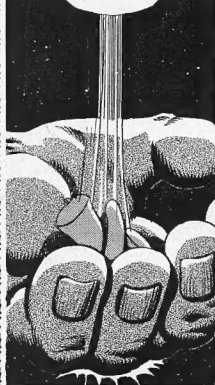
FRED!

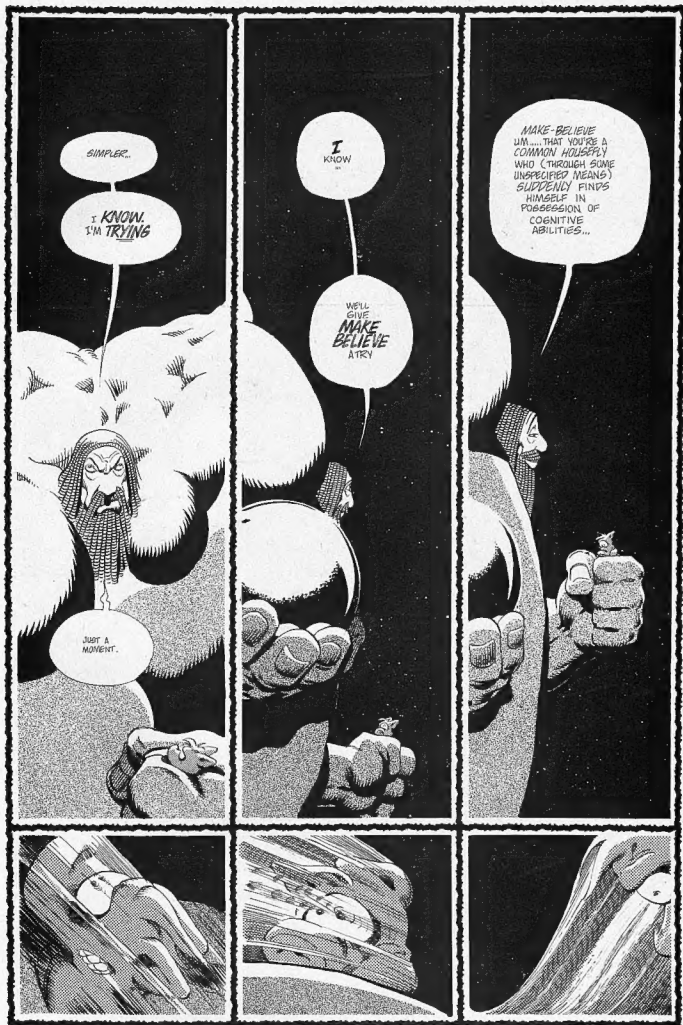
AND WHO COULD
SAY THAT, AS THE
INSTRUMENT
OF YOUR DESTRUCTION

(*EVOLVED*,
SHALL WE SAY
MORE *FULLY*
AS I AM)

... THAT IT IS NOT
ALTOGETHER
UNLIKELY THAT
I MIGHT SUFFER
EVEN MORE
EXTREME
FORMS OF
CONSEQUENCE

AS A
CONSEQUENCE





SIMPLER...

I KNOW.
I'M TRYING

I
KNOW

WE'LL
GIVE
YOU
MAKE
BELIEVE
A TRY

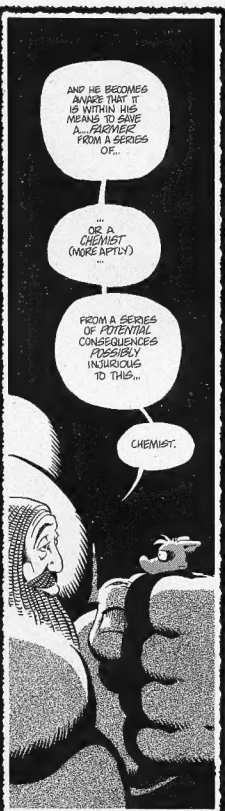
JUST A
MOVIESET.

MAKE-BELIEVE
UM.... THAT YOU'RE A
COMMON HOUSEFLY
WHO (THROUGH SOME
UNSPECIFIED MEANS)
SUDDENLY FINDS
HIMSELF IN
POSSESSION OF
COGNITIVE
ABILITIES...



FINDS
HIMSELF
CAPABLE OF
THOUGHT

OH.



AND HE BECOMES
AWARE THAT IT
IS WITHIN HIS
MEANS TO SAVE
A... FARMER
FROM A SERIES
OF...

...
OR A
CHEMIST
(MORE APPLY)

FROM A SERIES
OF POTENTIAL
CONSEQUENCES
POSSIBLY
INJURIOUS
TO THIS...

CHEMIST.



WELL, I DON'T THINK
I CAN MAKE IT
MUCH SIMPLER!
IN EVOLUTIONARY
TERMS ALONE THE
IDEA OF A HOUSE-
FLY SACRIFICING
HIS LIFE FOR THE
GREATER GOOD OF
A CHEMIST MAKES
THE WHOLE PROPOSITION
IRRESISTIBLE
TO THE HOUSEFLY...

YOU
SEE?

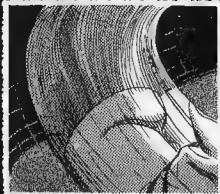
NO.

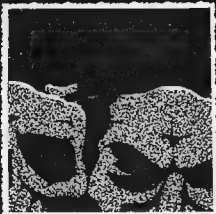
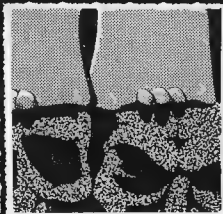
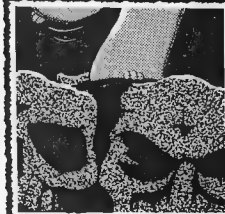
IT MAKES
OF HIM A VIRTUAL
TOAD! PERHAPS
EVEN A WOOD-
CHUCK...

AND ALL THE
HOUSEFLY HAS
TO DO IS JUMP

OFF
A
TOWER
AND?

DASH
HIT W/ HOUSEFLY
BRAINS
OUT.











YOU KNOW, THIS
IS **EXACTLY**
THE SORT OF
THING WHICH
COMPELS
EVOLUTION TO
LIMP ALONG
ON THE BASIS
OF **NATURAL**
SELECTION...!



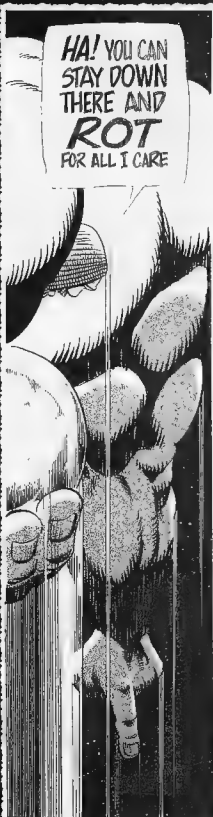
URR
RUR..



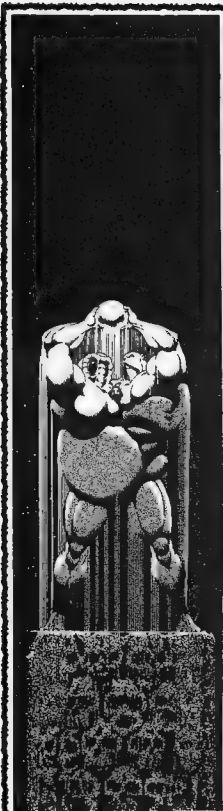
REALLY?

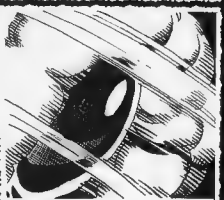
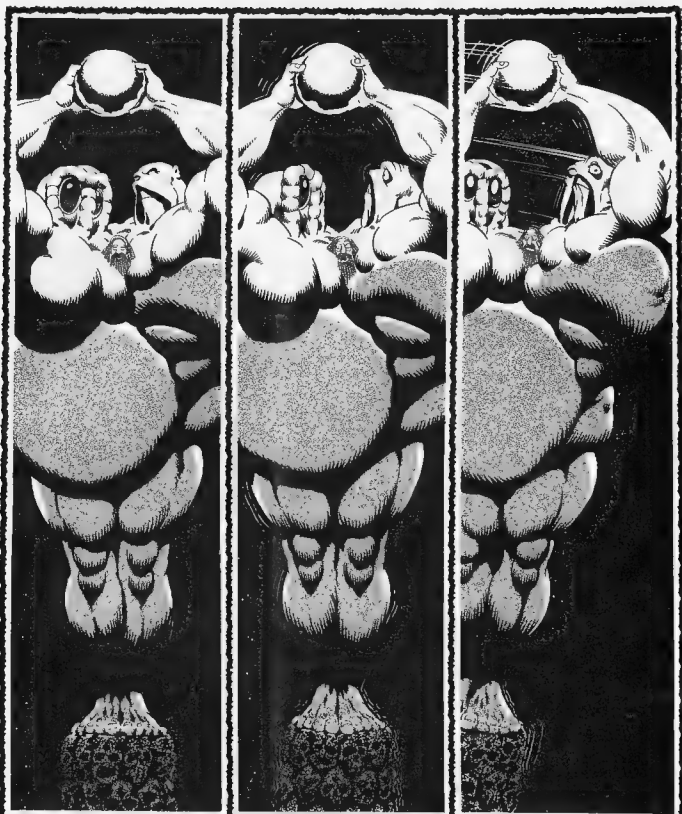
YOU'RE
QUITE
SURE?

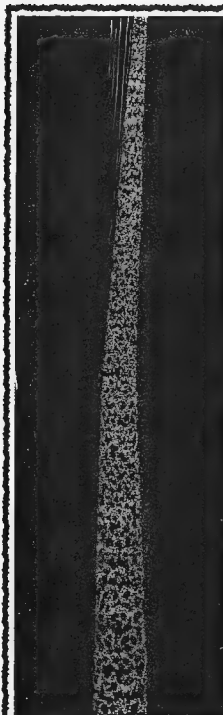
HA! YOU CAN
STAY DOWN
THERE AND
ROT
FOR ALL I CARE

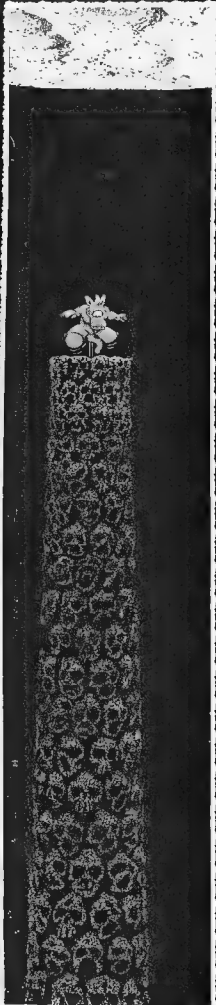
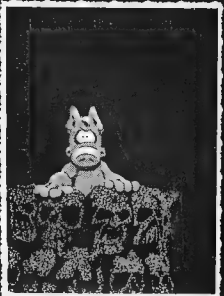














N E X T

W A L K I N G O N T H E M O O N

AARDVARK C O M M E N T

P.O. BOX 1674, STATION 'C', KITCHENER, ONTARIO N2G 4R2

Dear Dave:

Thank you for acknowledging me in Aardvark Comment.

After reading your reply, I shook my head. Not once, not twice, but for the whole day and for the better part of a week.

I was very surprised to see the letter was printed. Personally, I would have preferred one of your trademark short, sarcastic, semi-obscene replies, but your long, reasonable, rational one sort of shook me up. I don't know, you really seemed sort of offended instead of just plain pissed off. (Do you recognize satire when you see it?)

If your reply had been curt, I would probably not be writing this letter right now. (My next letter will probably be under a pseudonym, no doubt).

I really don't expect, nor do I care, if this letter is printed at all. After all, you'll be getting a lot of letters about the Carrot anyway. But I just want to say this.

Have I offended, then I am sorry.

I really can't apologize for the general act of writing to you though. Believe it or not, I was pissed off, and not a little disappointed in you. Now that I understand your position a little more, I hope you understand the motivation for that letter (i.e. I was mad as hell). I can't say that I'm not fully justified.

I honestly hope you don't shy away from the occasional personal appearance from time to time, especially next year's Chanty Con. Joel really is a very nice guy and I'd hate for him to come out short from all this.

But after your very rational reply, I think I understand your feelings on the matter.

I think.

Yours with mixed feelings,

Terry Woo
Unionville, Ontario

Let me see if I've got this straight. You sent me a satirical letter threatening my life which you feel at least partly justified in doing, you are surprised that I was offended by this threat on my life instead of "just plain pissed off" and you are disappointed that my answer to you was long and reasonable and rational instead of short, sarcastic and semi-obscene. Please. Go away.

Hi, Dave.

Pardon me but I'm going to be an intrusive li'l shit. Dave, I assume that as the section of the Black Tower revolves ever faster, you are taking into consideration the artificial gravity that C. will experience. This would explain why C. is now able to walk up the wall which of course becomes C.'s floor. Right, basic physics. However, you also show a stone head of Weissaupt falling on C.'s toe. If you don't mind, I must point out that such a thing is not possible. See the force of gravity would be expressed evenly over the inside surface of the tower and anything that is dislodged would tend to stick to the inside surface. For an object to fall from the height indicated, said object would have to overcome gravity on one side of the tower, pass a zone of weightlessness and then fall. I know that you must be granted artistic license and I guess you can get away with the goof.

However, consider what would happen if the stone had been dislodged sufficiently to roll along the surface of the tower. It would have been a great scene. C. is sitting there thoughtfully considering his toes. A vague rumble appears in the background, getting ever louder until suddenly out of the darkness appears the great Weissaupt stone, a smile on his lips, and rolls neatly over C.'s toes as a bewildered look spreads across the face of C. I apologize for taking the liberty of including an idea of what it might look like. I did the best I could and that ain't much.

I also wanted to say that I really enjoy the artwork. You and Gerhard are great. The faces in the walls are breathtaking. In fact, the first issue I picked up was 69 and the faces prompted me to buy the book. The story keeps me coming back. The Church and State storyline is very compelling to me. I can see the historical precedences that you use for the conflict, especially the issue of the nature of the Creator. This issue has raged throughout all religions ever since man decided that someone must have kicked the whole thing into gear and no one has really come up with an answer except the old "the nature of God is unknowable" bit.

What rags my ass though is the people who insist that The Big Guy is

omnipotent. That would mean that G. knows everything and knows our immediate experience (he knows what we know the exact way we know it). This would seem to indicate, therefore, that each one of us is partaking of the godhead at this moment and every moment. Thus, I am God, you are God, even Connie Lingus and her sister Anna are God. Yet when you point this out to those who favour omnipotence, the jerks will accuse you of being some kind of long-haired pinko freak.

Of course, I am.

Jim Smith
P.O. Box 1644,
Wise, VA., 24293

Connie Lingus -- God? There's a thought to give sober men pause.

Dear Dave, (this is personal, but print it if you want.)

Sorry not to type, but this is personal. You may remember me from from a letter in issue 46. I was the American Kennedy politician who lauded your political realism.

This is a very serious reaction to the Aardvark Comments in the (presently) current issue of *Cerebus*, #104.

First, I think the guy was just blowing off steam, or to be metaphorically correct, the asshole was farting ...

But, but ... when I was a lad of 15 (then an American - now I'm a Canadian - married one Elizabeth and swore allegiance to another), I watched the first man I worked for, Bobby Kennedy, killed. You and I both saw John Lennon buy the farm.

Just so you'll know I'm not blowin' smoke about understanding, I'll tell you a little horrorshow story.

When still a teen, I got a phone call saying, "Are you that nigger-lovin' Kennedy jerk?" "Uh, in a rough manner of speaking," I drawl. "We don't want you helping them, boy. You're in big trouble." CLICK!

So, I tell the racist cops. It's like Dylan says, "The cops don't need you, and man, they expect just the same." Three days later, riding in my friend's car on our usual route home, a bullet went through our windshield, and lodged in the seat between us. So friend, I know.

Take care of your ass boy. Probably this T. Woo is an anal-retentive obsessive compulsive fanboy. But take care of your goddamn ass, Clarence.

We can't just hide. Then these geek-dweeb win, and our lives, preserved, are no longer worth preserving. So, we endeavour to persevere. We go out, we toil, we hope to all the gods we make it, but we can't hide. We can look out for each other. And ourselves. And maybe, just maybe, it helps to know

that for Woo's gang, this ol' Missouri boy loves ya, for your writing, your art, and your ethics and integrity, superimposed on an ability to have one hell-raisin' good time. I'm here, pal, if it helps.

One point otherwise. My pal Diana Schutz. Don'tcha think maybe she's a bit cooler than some of the other editors? A little? Well anyway, if in Ottawa, I can't do cons (ask me why fans hate me for marrying Eliz Holden) but I'll buy you a drink, or coffee.

Take care, take chances, but don't take Mark Newel seriously.

Steven Sawolkin,
Ottawa, Ontario

Seems he turned out to be the fanboy of your description.

On the subject of Diana Schutz - having read too many pages of Herself and Bob Schreck describing how absolutely mind-boggling and well-deserved their success has been with their comic book company in Comics Interview saluting their fifth anniversary (Can you imagine? Five whole years! I'm green with envy.) and how they transformed a two-bit fanzine-level company into The Corporate Juggernaut With a Heart That Ships on Schedule and Tolerates no Typos - I shall follow Thumper's advice and say nothing at all.

Dear Dave,

Just a quick note of thanks for those intimate back cover photos you're so good to share with us. Please let me speak in behalf of the female readership in praising you for heights of repulsiveness you manage always to achieve in your personal appearance. In fact, this is the entire secret of your appeal: because there seems to be nothing drastically wrong with your genetic make-up (at least physically), and because, in spite of this, you go to such lengths to project the disgusting slop you truly are, you attract those of us who secretly wish we could afford not to give half a shit about our appearance either. Congratulations are in order: you truly are a self-made uglytoid. Of course we all know, your artistic genius counting for shit, where would the infamous Dave Sim ego be if you didn't manage to get laid once in awhile?

Andrea Knapp
7 Holland Avenue,
Westfield, MA. 01085.

"Truly" doesn't have an "e" in it.

Dave -

Just wanted to pop this in your direction; you once told me at a con years ago "just keep doing it and it'll improve," and I just wanted to show the improvement.

I guess I look upon your work as an inspiration/mirror for myself: as

Cerebus has grown and matured, I have too, etc. etc.

Sales suck right now, as do almost everyone's, so I'm trying to come up with some bitching marketing ideas. How'd you do it?

That's all. "The Return of the Narrator" issue was tits. Can't wait for the next one. Sure you don't want to go bi-weekly for the rest of the run?

Jim Bricker
San Jose, CA.

There aren't any workable marketing ideas for a black and white comic book. You build your circulation one reader at a time until, ultimately, you have a core constituency that won't desert you no matter how much four-colour crap is being shovelled at them. After about sixty or seventy issues that core constituency is large enough to earn you a very good living. That's all. Thanks for the copy of Open Season. I loved it.

Dear Dave Sim,

I am writing in regards to your response to Tom Zmudinski's letter (#93) in which you stated that comic book distributors and yourself need each other equally. Correct me if I'm wrong, but Cerebus is pretty much dependant on comic book stores to sell books. I mean, sure, if for some reason distributors were to boycott Cerebus you could always make it "subscription only" but then where would you get all your new customers? Face it - you need distributors to push Cerebus. The reverse, however, is not true. Sure Cerebus is a great comic book (the only one I currently buy as a matter of fact) and I would have no reason to go anywhere near a comic book store if not for Cerebus, but the cold hard truth is that this is not true for everyone. Most people who go into a comic store want GI Joe, or something equally mindless. That is what the majority of comic readers (and more importantly buyers) want, and one little book doesn't make that much difference. I am not saying that Cerebus is completely insignificant - this is not true (I speak from experience as I used to work at Hi-De-Ho Comics in Santa Monica (Hi, Bob) and we did sell out of Cerebus quite frequently). I'm just saying that comic book stores don't depend on or "need" Dave Sim.

On the other hand I do agree with your opinion that distributors should invest in Cerebus and expand the circulation tho probably not for the same reasons as you. I am disgusted at what appears to be happening to most of the comics industry - and I would like to see quality creations such as Cerebus, Life in Hell, Mr. X, Love and Rockets, etc. all get the fame and admiration they deserve. Granted most people who read Cerebus are infinitely more devoted than some

mental X-Men vegetable. But does Cerebus attract the same numbers? No, and I think that there is something very wrong with this.

Anyway, enough with this as I'm probably not expressing anything new to you, but I just wanted to have my say. At first I was considering writing another generic "fan-letter-of-praise-to-the-great-and-omnipotent Dave Sim" but I didn't want to come off as yet another drooling sycophant. Yet the urge is just too overpowering so here goes - "Cerebus is the single best comic-book in the whole world!"

(Really - it is)

See you in hell.

Seth Stevens
16102 Martinquidit Road,
Poway, CA. 92064

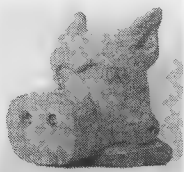
Fame is a price exacted, not a reward earned. Admiration is a reward only insofar as the admiration is mutual. The fact that circulation shot up to 37,000 on issue 100 means that most of the distribution network is treating Cerebus like another Marvel or DC title (I imagine they were disappointed that it wasn't a giant-size X-Men cross-over). 80% of our financial support comes from the individual fans who order our reprint collections. Our continued existence is assured by Cerebus' strength in a very soft back-issue market. If I was just counting our income from the monthly book (i.e. the distributors) Cerebus would have been cancelled around issue 95.

Dear Dave,

Good letter column, #102. Made a nice change. I was going to drop Cerebus after 100 but haven't yet.

Eileen Roy
3619 Fletcher Dr., #B
Los Angeles, CA. 90065

I promise I'll be good.

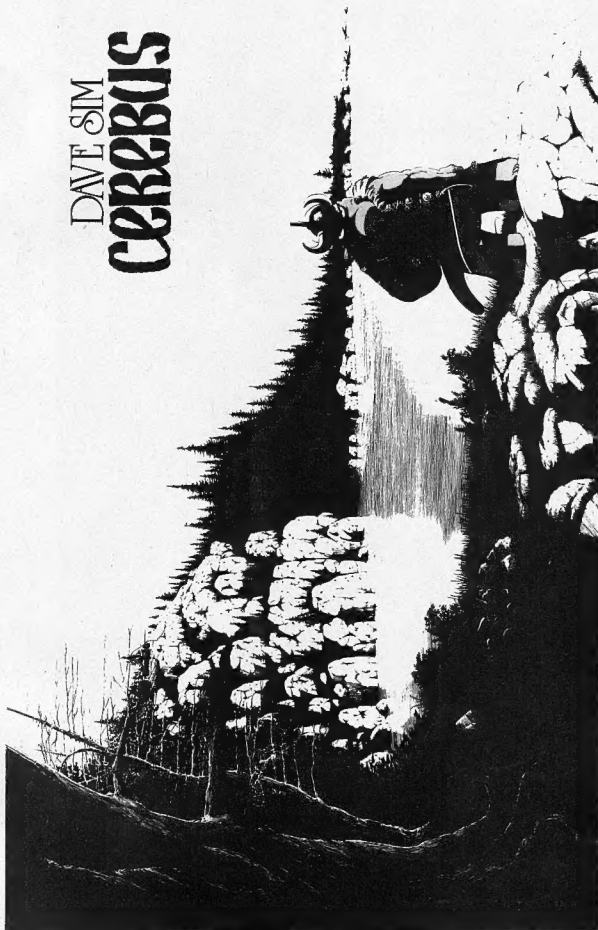


Ben Samuels of Kansas City, MO., offers a swap of this 4 foot tall redwood sculpture of Cerebus for an inked original sketch of Cerebus, any page of original artwork or making Gerhard draw a background for him. What do you think? Should I go for it?

PHONE NUMBERS 519-576-7820 • 519-576-0610

No Personal Cheques

Hours: 9:00 am to 6:00 pm E.S.T.



DAVE SIM CERBERUS

REPRINTS CERBERUS 1 - 25
22.00 U.S.
27.00 CANADIAN
plus \$2.00 for postage

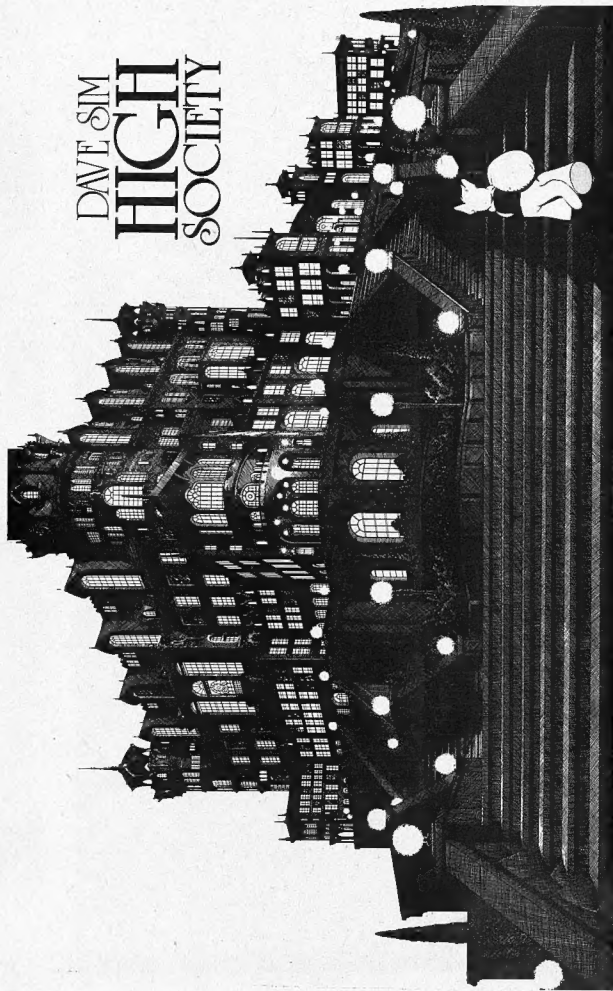


BOX OF 16 BOOKS
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AVAILABLE NOW

DAVE SIM HIGH SOCIETY



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20.00 U.S.
25.00 CANADIAN
plus \$2.00 for postage

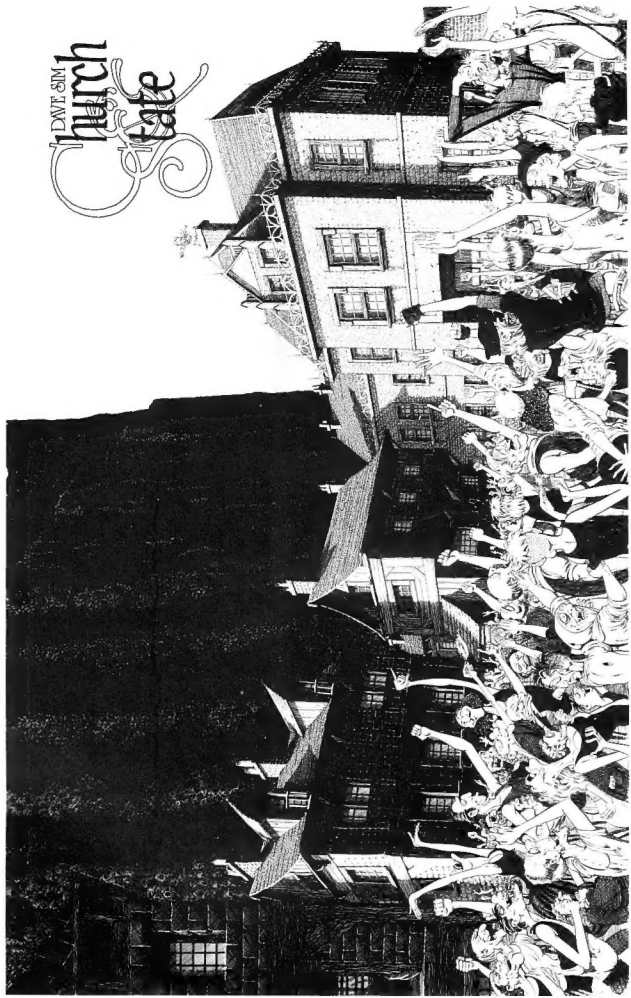


BOX OF 16 BOOKS
250.00 U.S.
340.00 CANADIAN



Certified Cheque/Money Order Payable to: AARDVARK-VANAHEIM INC., Box 1674, Station 'C', Kitchener, Ontario N2G 4R2

Dave Sim Church State



REPRINTS CEREBUS 52 - 80
25.00 U.S.
30.00 CANADIAN
plus \$2.50 for postage



BOX OF 16 BOOKS
300.00 U.S.
400.00 CANADIAN



FRONT COVER : MOON (detail) by GERHARD

BACK COVER : GERHARD, ERIC HANEK and SCOTTY ROTTEN
by GERHARD'S CAMERA